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FM AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0362

INFO ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE

RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0015

RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0017

RUEHMS/AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

UNCLAS MUSCAT 000361

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/ARP

NEA/PPD

NEA/PI

INR/R/MR

NEA/SA/EX/PMO

LONDON FOR NEA WATCHER

PARIS FOR NEA WATCHER

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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OITP](#) [KPAQ](#) [KMDR](#) [MU](#)

SUBJECT: OMAN MEDIA REACTION

**¶1.** SUMMARY: This week in Omani dailies, state "Oman" praised President Obama's speech in Istanbul, saying it discredited the argument of a clash of civilizations. On April 18, private "Al Watan" called on Arab states to take decisive steps towards peace with Israel, warning against reliance on Washington's initiatives. Also on April 18, a commentary in "Al Watan" called President Obama the "American Lion" for thwarting Prime Minister Netanyahu's intent to attend the annual AIPAC conference. END SUMMARY.

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"AN IMPORTANT AND HISTORIC STEP"  
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**¶12.** On April 15, Arabic-language daily "Oman" (circulation 38,000) ran a commentary by a prominent Omani scholar in response to President Obama's speech in Turkey, calling it a "positive proposal".

According to "The Significance of Obama's Call in Reconciliation with Islam":

"During his visit to Turkey, President Obama expressed a new and positive view towards Islam, which was contrary to the previous U.S. neo-conservative administration's. He said that the U.S. is not at war with Islam, and that the relationship with the Muslim world should not be driven by al Qaeda. There is no doubt that this proposal means the U.S. is going to head down a new path with the Islamic world. Obama's call in Istanbul is an important and historic step to demolish theories of a clash of civilizations between Muslims and the West. The world, as Obama tried to suggest, can live in harmony rather than conflict."

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"ARABS NEED TO TAKE DECISIVE STEPS"  
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**¶13.** On April 18, private Arabic daily "Al Watan" (circulation 42,000) called on Arabs to drive forward the peace process and not depend exclusively on President Obama's plan, which "might not be achieved".

According to "The Peace in this Region Needs Decisive Steps":

"The U.S. policy towards the Middle East has been always based on balancing economic needs with Arab partners and a commitment to protect Israel. American's main goal is to pressure Arab partners to strengthen Israeli security; therefore, Arabs do not receive equal treatment. Because of this unjust policy, the U.S. has lost its credibility in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Although Obama is trying to create a new policy in the Middle East, which is emphasized by George Mitchell's support for the two-state solution, this goal might not be achieved. Arabs need to take decisive steps and pressure Israel to take move towards peace."

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"THE U.S. WILL NO LONGER BEAR ISRAELI IGNORANCE"  
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¶4. On April 18, a commentary in "Al Watan" praised President Obama (referred to as the "American Lion") for "thwarting" Prime Minister Netanyahu's intent to attend the annual AIPAC meeting. "Israeli Arrogance on the Way to Disintegration" said:

"Washington has thwarted Netanyahu. The apology by the American Lion for not being able to meet Netanyahu pushed him to cancel his visit to the annual AIPAC conference. This step is significant because the AIPAC meeting is an annual demonstration of American loyalty to Israel. Without accepting the proposed two-state solution, Netanyahu's visit to Washington is not welcome. The U.S. envoy George Mitchell also insisted on America's commitment to the two-state solution in every Arab capital he visited. He wanted to inform Israel that the situation has changed, and that the U.S. will no longer bear Israeli arrogance."

GRAPPO